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## THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN ASSOCIATIONS.

To THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Those members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science who went from Detroit to Toronto naturally made comparisons as to the methods by which the affairs of the two organizations were conducted. Permit me, therefore, as one who attended both meetings, to suggest three things which, if properly carried out, will tend to improve, at least to a certain extent, some features in the American Association.

First. The addresses of the President and Vice-Presidents of sections should be in type and ready for publication at the time of the meeting of the Association. By this means the addresses would be available to the daily and scientific press, and every address would be given out at the same time. At Detroit the President's address was not properly reported by any local newspaper, and of the Vice-Presidential addresses only that of Professor Mason was available in pamphlet form.

Second. All papers passed by the sectional committee should go through the hands of a competent press secretary, specially hired for the purpose, preferably a scientific man, who should prepare suitable abstracts of the same for publication. These abstracts should be duplicated by some convenient copying process and given to reporters as desired.

By the combination of these two methods a proper and dignified presentation of the work of the Association would be given to the public, and by using the same for the proceedings the publication of the volume could be begun at once at the close of the meeting. For with the addresses in type and the abstracts in manuscript the volume could be put together and issued as soon as it could be printed.

Third. In lieu of the single public reception given on the first evening of the meeting I would advocate a greater number of social functions at which the members could meet each other. At each meeting of the British Association, besides a reception, there is always a conversazione and a subscription dinner which is given in honor of the retiring President. Would not such gatherings tend to bring the members of our Association into closer re-

lationship with each other? For, after all, it is often the spoken word rather than the formal paper that suggests a line of research or is most fruitful in aiding workers in science.

MARCUS BENJAMIN.

U. S. NATIONAL MUSEUM, November 6, 1897.

## SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

*Boletin del Instituto Geologico de Mexico.* Nums. 7, 8 y 9. El Mineral de Pachuca.

Since the Geological Survey of Mexico was placed in charge of Sr. J. G. Aquilera, two or three years ago, the work has been prosecuted with great energy and several quarto bulletins, well illustrated, have been issued. These include a sketch of Mexican geology, studies of rocks and fossils as well as studies of special areas.

The volume named at the head of this note gives the results of detailed examination of a well-known region which, more than once, has attracted the attention of European geologists. There are chapters by nearly all members of the staff, illustrated with 8 large maps and diagrams and 6 quarto plates. These describe elaborately the physiography, general geology, veins, and microscopic character of the rocks as well as matters of economic interest.

The district of Pachuca, not far from Mexico, is almost midway in the Sierra de Real del Monte y Pachuca, on the lower half of the westerly slope and near the southwest border of the Sierra. It embraces about 20 square kilometers and its principal mines are in three ravines which unite to form the Rio de Pachuca. Its output of silver in former years was almost fabulous, but since 1895 it has been practically idle, owing to the flooding of the mines. Now, however, the drainage operations promise to be successful and the geological structure of the region becomes of much interest to Mexicans.

The rocks are all eruptives, though sedimentary deposits, most probably Cretaceous, are shown within a short distance. Andesites, rhyolites and basalts are the forms, and of each there occur numerous varieties in texture, color and composition. The chapter on the general geology by Aguilera and Ordoñez gives much detail respecting the macroscopic features of these rocks and their chronological relations. The authors feel justified in concluding that